CLASSIFICATION OFFICE DECISION

Title of publication: Bumfights III: The Felony Footage

Other known title(s): Bum Fights.mpg
Bumfights 3

OFLC ref: 0900333.003

Medium: Computer Moving Image File

Director: Not stated

Country of origin: United States

Language: English

Applicant: The District Court at Christchurch

Classification: Objectionable.

Excisions: No excisions recommended

Descriptive note: None

Display conditions: None

Date of entry in Register: 26 May 2009

Date of direction to issue a label: No direction to issue a label has been issued

	Components	Running time
Feature(s):	Bumfights III: The Felony Footage	44:24
Total running time:		44:24

Summary of reasons for decision:

The feature originates from the USA and is a collection of scenes in which homeless and other disadvantaged people are physically assaulted, enticed with offers of money and drugs to fight each other, made to perform stunts that put themselves and others at risk of injury, and who are otherwise ridiculed by the film makers. The publication is classified as objectionable due to the manner in which it presents degrading, violent, and criminal activity. The publication tends to glamorise and trivialise true life violence and crime purely as a means of entertainment. In doing so it also exploits a number of homeless people living in the Untied States by presenting them as

spectacles for the purpose of entertainment. Depictions of street fighting, assaults and drug taking are edited together with little or no context. There is also the probability that glamorising this type of material will encourage others to emulate it in order to achieve notoriety or financial gain.

A classification of "objectionable" places a limit on the right to the freedom of expression as set out in s14 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990. However, given the high extent and degree to which the DVD presents criminal acts, violence and degrading behaviour as a means of entertainment, the classification is a reasonable limit prescribed by law that can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.